To make available life saving and essential drugs at reasonable prices to the poor, the draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy-2006 proposes, *inter alia,* that the basket for price control would be the essential medicines as contained in the National List of Essential Medicines, 2003 in addition to 74 drugs which are at present under price control under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995.

Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 11.1.2007. The Cabinet has referred the Policy to Group of Ministers (GOM). The First meeting of the GOM was held on 10.4.2007. No time frame has been set for finalizing the National Pharmaceuticals Policy.

Price hike of medicines

2029. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have fixed prices of nine commonly-used drugs and whether it has been noticed that prices have shot up for no valid reasons;

(b) whether the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority has asked major companies including Novartis, Ranbaxy, Nicholas Piramal and USV Ltd. to revise medicine prices downwards to the levels fixed by the body; and

(c) if so, whether the NPPA has taken decision to fix prices and has directed companies to make the relevant changes in their MRP and the range of reduction varies between 0.7-23 percent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has fixed prices of 9 non-Scheduled formulations on 13.06.07 & 27.06.07 and subsequently another 11 non-Scheduled formulations on 30.07.07 under para 10(b) of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995(DPCO, 1995) where it was noticed that the prices had increased by more than 20% in a period of 12 months on the basis of IMS data.

(b) and (c) NPPA has directed all the manufacturing companies concerned to sell the relevant products at the MRP fixed by NPPA. The range of price reduction on the above said 20 products varies between 0.76% to 36.23%.

Revival of sick units

2030. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have kicked off the process to revive seven sick units of the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. and the Fertilizer Corporation of India;

(b) whether to begin with, the department of fertilizers has roped in State-run Projects and Development India Ltd., a leading consultancy in the sector, to help to expedite the revival process; and